

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 ROME 14185 01 OF 02 021740Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 /066 W
-----053023 021818Z /42

R 021630Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4643
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMCONSUL TRIESTE POUCH
AMCONSUL TURIN POUCH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 14185

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT,IT
SUBJ: CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS SUBMERGE DIFFERENCES AT NATIONAL COUNCIL
MEETING

SUMMARY: THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY'S NATIONAL COUNCIL,
JULY 28-30, SHOWED THE PARTY UNITED ON THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE
PRESENT GOVERNING ARRANGEMENT (PCI IN THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY)
FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF FORLANI WHO
MAY HAVE WISHED TO STAKE OUT A POSITION OF OPPOSITION BY
CRITICIZING THE PARTY LEADERSHIP FOR INACTION, DC LEADERS SUBMERGED
THEIR DIFFERENCES IN A SHOW OF UNITY, ELECTING
FLAMINIO PICCOLI AS NEW DC PRESIDENT AND APPROVING ZACCAGNINI'S
TWO-HOUR SPEECH BY AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY. IN ATTEMPTING
TO DEFINE THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE DC'S TEMPORARY
"EMERGENCY" COOPERATION WITH THE PCI, TWO BASIC TENDENCIES
NONETHELESS EMERGED. SOME, LIKE ZACCAGNINI AND ANDREOTTI,
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 ROME 14185 01 OF 02 021740Z

TEND TO REGARD CRAXI'S INDEPENDENT POLICIES AS DESTABILIZING
AND SEE THE LONG-TERM SOLUTION TO ITALY'S POLITICAL
CRISIS IN THE EVENTUAL DEMOCRATIC EVOLUTION OF THE PCI. OTHERS,
INCLUDING MANY PARTY MODERATES AND CONSERVATIVES, LOOK ON
THE PSI'S NEW AUTONOMIST COURSE WITH FAVOR AND CONSIDER THAT THE
PCI WILL ALWAYS REMAIN ANTITHETICAL TO THE DC. OVER THE SHORT
TERM, HOWEVER, BOTH GROUPS BELIEVE THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT

FORMULA SHOULD BE MAINTAINED. END SUMMARY.

1. MEETING FOR THE FIRST TIME IN NEARLY TEN MONTHS, THE DC NATIONAL COUNCIL TOOK PLACE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF SURFACE HARMONY AND UNITY. IT ELECTED FLAMINIO PICCOLI TO SUCCEED ALDO MORO AS DC PRESIDENT WITH A LARGE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE (ROME 13933). IT OVERWHELMINGLY APPROVED DC SECRETARY ZACCAGNINI'S ACCOUNT OF THE PARTY'S CONDUCT SINCE FORMATION OF THE CURRENT ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT AND ENDORSED THE CONTINUED VALIDITY OF MORO'S POLICY OF "COMPETITIVE DEIALOGUE" WITH THE OTHER PARTIES. IT PUT OFF UNTIL ANOTHER NATIONAL COUNCIL IN THE FALL (OCT. 6-8) LONG-DELAYED REFORMS IN THE PARTY STATUTE.

2. ZACCAGNINI'S SPEECH: ADDRESSING THE ASSEMBLY FOR OVER TWO HOURS ON JULY 29, ZACCAGNINI DWELT AT LENGTH ON THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE DC'S COOPERATION WITH THE PCI IN THE PRESENT PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY AND ON WHAT THE DC'S ATTITUDE SHOULD BE TOWARD THE PSI'S POLICY OF AUTONOMY. EVOKING MORO, ZACCAGNINI RECALLED THAT THE DC'S COOPERATION WITH THE PCI AND OTHER PARTIES ON SPECIFIC ISSUES TO OVERCOME THE EMERGENCY WAS NEVER INTENDED AS AN ALLIANCE. IN A KEY PASSAGE, ZACCAGNINI WARNED THAT "WE MUST NOT MAKE THE MISTAKE OF CONSIDERING THE EMERGENCY AS A SITUATION THAT CAN BE PROLONGED INDEFINITELY, NOR AS A FORMULA DESTINED TO CONDITION OUR POLITICAL CHOICES IN SOME ABSOLUTE WAY." ON THE OTHER HAND, ZACCAGNINI STRESSED, THERE CAN BE NO SIMPLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 ROME 14185 01 OF 02 021740Z

RETURN TO THE PAST. THE EMERGENCY FORMULA SHOULD LEAD TO A NEW FORM OF SOCIETY AND POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS; ZACCAGNINI DID NOT ELABORATE, HOWEVER, PRECISELY WHAT HE HAD IN MIND. A NEW CENTER-LEFT ALLIANCE WITH THE PCI IN THE OPPOSITION WAS NOT THE ANSWER. DESPITE "HIGHLY POSITIVE" DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PSI, ZACCAGNINI

SAID "IT WOULD BE A SERIOUS ERROR....TO CONCLUDE THAT THE PSI IS READY TO FORM PART OF A GOVERNMENT MAJORITY WHICH DOES NOT TAKE THE PCI INTO ACCOUNT IN SOME WAY." SINCE THE DC CANNOT ACCEPT THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE AND A NEW ALLIANCE WITH THE PSI IS NOT PRESENTLY AN ALTERNATIVE, ZACCAGNINI CONCLUDED THAT THE CURRENT FORMULA WAS "UNSUBSTITUTABLE" FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

3. TWO TENDENCIES CLEAR: IN CONTRAST TO THE SPIRITED DEBATE THAT WENT ON LAST MARCH OVER THE ACCEPTABILITY OF THE PCI IN THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY, THE GOVERNMENT FORMULA WAS NOT AN ISSUE AT THE COUNCIL. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF DECAROLIS AND A SMALL GROUP OF FOLLOWERS, THERE WERE SIGNIFICANTLY NO CALLS FOR EARLY ELECTIONS. NONETHELESS, TWO BASIC DIFFERENCES IN APPROACH WERE CLEARLY EVIDENT. ONE GROUP (FOLLOWERS OF ZACCAGNINI, ANDREOTTI AND DEMITA) FEARS THAT CRAXI'S

AUTONOMIST POLICIES ARE DESTABILIZING AND ARGUES THAT THE EMERGENCY CANNOT BE OVERCOME WITHOUT THE PCI'S ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION. MOREOVER, THEY BELIEVE THAT THE LONG-TERM SOLUTION TO ITALY'S POLITICAL CRISIS LIES IN ENCOURAGING THE PCI'S DEMOCRATIC EVOLUTION (AND THE BERLINGUER ELEMENT) TO PERMIT IT TO ACT ONE DAY AS A DEMOCRATICALLY SAFE ALTERNATIVE. THE OTHER TENDENCY, EXPRESSED BY PARTY MODERATES AND CONSERVATIVES, DOUBTS THE PCI'S DEMOCRATIC CONVERTIBILITY, CONSIDERS THAT THE PCI'S INTERESTS WILL ALWAYS BE ANTITHETICAL TO THE DC'S, AND PERCEIVES THE PSI'S NEW-FOUND AUTONOMY AS AN ENCOURAGING INDICATION THAT THE DC MAY BE ABLE TO RE-ESTABLISH A DIALOGUE WITH THE PSI.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 ROME 14185 02 OF 02 021750Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 /066 W

-----053523 021819Z /42

R 021630Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4644
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMCONSUL TRIESTE POUCH
AMCONSUL TURIN POUCH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 14185

4. THUS, PROPONENTS OF THE FIRST GROUP SUCH AS ZACCAGNINI WARNED THAT IT WOULD BE RISKY TO SEEK TO EXPLOIT THE PCI'S PRESENT DIFFICULTIES SINCE DOING SO COULD FORCE THE COMMUNISTS INTO ADOPTING A HARDER LINE. DEMITA (LEFT-WING FACTIONAL LEADER) CITED THE "AMBIGUITIES" OF THE PSI'S BEHAVIOR (POSITION ON MORO KIDNAPPING AND PUBLIC ORDER REFERENDUM) AS INDICATIONS THAT THE AUTONOMIST LINE IS UNLIKELY TO MAKE THE PSI A RELIABLE PARTNER OF THE DC. THE PCI'S BEHAVIOR, IN CONTRAST, DEMONSTRATES THAT THE COMMUNISTS WISH TO WORK WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS. IN HIS SPEECH, ZACCAGNINI WENT SO FAR AS TO STATE THAT IT DID NOT MATTER TO THE DC WHETHER THE PCI OR THE PSI EVENTUALLY CAME

TO DOMINATE THE LEFT; THE ONLY IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION WAS THAT THE LEFT'S DEMOCRATIC EVOLUTION (THE PSI "IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN SOCIALISM," THE PCI'S IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL DEMOCRATIZATION) BE COMPLETE.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 ROME 14185 02 OF 02 021750Z

5. IN CONTRAST, DC LEADERS SUCH AS DEFENSE MINISTER RIFFINI (DOROTEO) CALLED THE PSI'S INDEPENDENT POLICY A "CLEARLY POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT" EVEN IF IT WOULD BE "IRRESPONSIBLE TO BELIEVE THAT THE POLITICAL FRAMEWORK CAN BE CHANGED IN THE SHORT-TERM." TO RUMOR, THE PSI'S AUTONOMIST STRATEGY REPRESENTS "A NEW AND SIGNIFICANT ELEMENT THAT BREAKS THE CLIMATE OF DANGEROUS UNIFORMITY AND OFFERS GREATER FLEXIBILITY TO THE DC." THE PCI, RUMOR SAID, WILL REMAIN "RADICALLY DIFFERENT THAN THE DC." AND BISAGLIA (DOROTEO LEADER) AGREED THAT WHILE CONDITIONS REQUIRE RETENTION OF THE EMERGENCY GOVERNING FORMULA, THE DC SHOULD NOT SIT BACK BUT RATHER WORK TO OVERCOME IT AND RETURN TO THE NORMAL SYSTEM OF A DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY AND MINORITY.

6. FORLANI'S SURPRISE MOVE: NOTWITHSTANDING THESE DIFFERENT APPROACHES, THE COUNCIL WOULD HAVE BEEN A TEPID AFFAIR WERE IT NOT FOR FOREIGN MINISTER FORLANI'S UNEXPECTED DECISION TO LAUNCH A HARD-HITTING ATTACK ON THE SECRETARIAT FOR INACTION JUST BEFORE THE SESSION CONCLUDED ON SUNDAY EVENING. FORLANI CRITICIZED ZACCAGNINI (HIS 1976 CONGRESS OPPONENT) FOR LACK OF PROGRESS IN PARTY RENEWAL. HE SAID THAT THE REAL DANGER TO THE GOVERNMENT'S STABILITY DID NOT DERIVE FROM THE SOCIALISTS' AUTONOMIST POLICY, BUT FROM THE DC'S "INCAPACITY" TO DEVELOP A STRATEGY CAPABLE OF RESOLVING THE VITAL PROBLEMS FACING THE NATION.

7. ACCORDING TO SOURCES WHO WERE PRESENT, FORLANI APPEARED UNDECIDED UNTIL THE LAST MOMENT ON WHETHER HE WOULD SPEAK. IN HIS COMMENTS, HE ASSOCIATED HIMSELF WITH HIS FORMER MENTOR, FANFANI, WHO HAD BOYCOTTED THE MEETING (SEE ROME 13933). FORLANI'S INTENTION, HOWEVER, MAY HAVE BEEN TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE APPARENT TACTICAL DECISION OF OTHER OPPOSITION LEADERS (NOTABLY DONAT-CATTIN) TO SOFT-PEDDLE THEIR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 ROME 14185 02 OF 02 021750Z

CRITICISM OF THE ANDREOTTI-ZACCAGNINI LEADERSHIP AT THE COUNCIL MEETING. IN SO DOING, FORLANI (WHOSE REPUTATION HAS BEEN TARNISHED BY SHERMAN-LIKE INDECISIVENESS) MAY HAVE BOLSTERED HIS STANDING WITH DC MODERATES AND CONSERVATIVES AS A POTENTIAL

CHALLENGER TO THE CURRENT LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY.

8. COMMENT: DESPITE DIFFERENCES IN APPROACH AND FORLANI'S SURPRISINGLY CIRITICAL SPEECH, THE DC SHOWED ITSELF AT THE COUNCIL TO BE UNITED ON THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT FORMULA FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. THE MEETING TOOK PLACE IN A FAR DIFFERENT ATMOSPHERE THAN THE LAST ONE, TEN MONTHS AGO, WHEN THE DC WAS ISOLATED POLITICALLY (WITH THE PSI AND OTHER FORMER COALITION PARTNERS CALLING FOR PCI ENTRY IN GOVERNMENT). ALTHOUGH DC LEADERS ARE STILL UNABLE TO OFFER A CLEAR STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE, THE PSI'S AUTONOMIST COURSE AND THE PCI'S MAY ELECTION SETBACK OFFER THE POSSIBILITY OF NEW GROUPINGS AND ALTERNATIVES. DESPITE THE RISKS AND INCREASED FRAGILITY OF A MORE FLUID POLITICAL SITUATION. SPEAKERS AT THE COUNCIL ADDRESSED THE FUTURE IN MARKEDLY MORE OPTIMISITIC TERMS. WHILE BASIC DIFFERENCES IN APPROACH REMAIN, THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THEM HAVE NARROWED. VIRTUALLY ALL THOSE WHO OPPOSED MORO'S PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY FORMULA LAST MARCH AND ARGUED FOR NEW ELECTIONS NOW ACCEPT THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT FRAMEWORK AS NECESSARY AND USEFUL FOR A LIMITED EMERGENCY PERIOD. THOSE WHO CALLED FOR GREATER ACCOMMODATION WITH THE PCI LAST WINTER NOW POINT TO THE RISKS OF PROLONGING THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY FORMULA INDEFINITELY. HOLMES

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CHRISTIANS, NATIONALS, MEETINGS, PARTY MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ROME14185
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780316-0572
Format: TEL
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197808107/aaaadlnh.tel
Line Count: 247
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b0008b58-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1560159
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS SUBMERGE DIFFERENCES AT NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY: THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY'S NATIONAL
TAGS: PINT, IT
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b0008b58-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014